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THREE SONGS WITH PRELUDES.

BY DERMOT HEATH.

A FORGOTTEN SONG.

YESTER-EVE when in the glowing
Of the setting sun I lay,
Watching wavelets coming, going,
Going, coming in the bay,
Borne upon the balmy breezes
Came a strain forgotten long,
Such as on a sad heart seizes
With the subtle power of song.
Rushing memories like a river
Break the bonds which bound them fast,
And my pulses quicken, quiver,
In the presence of the Past,
While the love which long lay sleeping
At the singing of that strain
Woke itself with bitter weeping,
Woke to life and hope again.

A truce with our sorrows!

The bitter to-morrows

We dread may not find us, or finding pass by:

To the present we're clinging,

To the far future flinging

The fears that would haunt us when pleasure is nigh.

Then seize on the maiden,
And let her be laden
With kisses of love ere the dainty lips pale;
For while youth is left us
Hope cannot be reft us,
And hearts such as ours will out-weather the gale.

A LOVE SONG.

AH! I remember when first I found
The boy-god's shaft in my bleeding breast—
My heart leapt forth with a passionate bound,
My spirit was filled with a wild unrest,
And my secret panted to be confessed.
We parted at last by the babbling brook,
My love and I, in the eventide,
I held her hand, and my strong frame shook,
And my blood rushed swiftly in surging tide
From heart to head, and from head to heart,
As I plucked from my bosom the love-dealt dart,
Showed her the wound and sought her for bride.

Linger awhile, Love, linger awhile!
The star-light enshrouds us, the night is fair;
You have slain me, Love, with a single smile,
You have caught me, Love, in your blue eyes snare,
And tangled my heart in the waves of your hair;
Oh maiden, dowered with a beauty rare:
Linger awhile, Love, linger awhile!

Must I confess, Love, can you not guess?
I want you, dear, for my very own;
You hold in your hands my happiness,
For love has rooted, and sprung, and grown,
Until my whole being is yours alone—
You must have seen, Love, you must have known.
Linger awhile, Love, linger awhile!

Linger awhile, Love, linger awhile—

We stand alone 'neath the star-lit skies ;

Bid me yet hope with a word or a smile :

Oh Love you are mine ! for deep in your eyes

I see the languishing love-light lies ;

You are mine, my Love, by the closest ties !

Linger awhile, Love, linger awhile.

A SONG OF THE PRESENT.

MEMORY is a blessing lent us,

Hope a boon Jehovah sent us,

And these two with soft caressing

From our hearts the Present pressing,

Make atonement for all sorrow ;

Till while dreaming of the morrow,

Or of pleasure passed that grieves us,

The sweet Present slyly slipping

From our clasping laughing leaves us,

Looking back as onward tripping

Mocking us with merry laughter,

Looking back and gaily singing,

Faded flow'rets at us flinging,

“ While you have me you should hold me,

Wrap strong arms about me, fold me

To your heart and kiss me boldly,

Since once gone, I come not after.”

Though bowed beneath a sense of wrong,

Though friends are few and foes are strong,

Still shall our lips break forth in song,

For joys and hopes remaining ;

Though o'er our heads are frowning skies,

Though in our hearts a lost love lies,

Though fortune at our footfall flies,

And life itself be waning ;

Still, with our faces forward set,

The buried Past we will forget,

For there are pleasures left us yet,

And prizes worth the gaining.

OUR HUSBANDMAN.

ALFRED TENNYSON. POET LAUREATE.

OUR husbandman! nor more, nor less—
Who labours in the lands of thought;
And labouring day by day has brought
His blades to mighty fruitfulness.

For every time his work he finds:
Now sowing happy words, like grain,
Which live and bloom, and bear again
A flower of joy in other minds.

Now pacing through life's moral fields
Of rank offence, destroying weeds—
Indignant, crushing doubtful seeds,
Out-rooting all that evil yields.

Then, when long summer suns have hurled
Fierce, ripening beams, with anxious care
He reaps and binds what he finds fair,
To give a harvest to the world.

Nor should he marvel that we find
For him no seeming-worthier name
To hold and add unto his fame
And best proclaim him to his kind.

The husbandman; who scatters wide,
And tends and toils, till seed makes bread
With which a hungry race is fed
Should surely use his name with pride.

Still more the one, who labouring long
Feeds healthy minds with healthy food,
Seeks and promotes the common good,
And purifies the world with song.

A. STONEHEWER.

DISAPPOINTMENT.

O FOOLISH heart! have not your thousand beats
Yet taught you one first lesson of the world—
That you must throb your life, thro' frosts and heats
Of pains or pleasures, as by fate they're hurled,
Nor ask a respite from a foe or friend,
But, never wavering, throb unto the end?

O silly heart! to fancy that for you
And all your changeful flutterings, men would cease
To slight or court; or thought, or cared, or knew,
Which hurt or healed you—fostered war or peace—
Or which wrought good or evil, smiles or tears,
Which brightened or which darkened all your years.

O simple heart! to be so little wise,
To chafe and writhe beneath so small a slight,
To understand so ill the quaint disguise
In which hard lessons burst upon our sight,
To comprehend so slowly this broad truth—
That disappointment is a friend to youth.

O wounded heart! your pain works half your cure;
Learn quickly this—the curious chance and change
Of all our life leaves nothing ever sure:
Blame not your lot—your grievance is not strange,
But one that hurt men sore, full long ago,
And yet shall hurt, when you shall cease to glow.

O erring heart! there are two separate ways
To tread the years: to take life as it is—
With all its woes, its shams, its blame, its praise,
Its often good, its sometimes wondrous bliss—
Or else to wait and hope and yearn to gain
Some unknown joy, which realised, would pain.

O wayward heart! hail gladly this surprise,
 This first slight check to youth's impetuous heat:
 Refuse regret, with larger wiser eyes
 Perceive beyond the pang of pained conceit,
 The needful lesson disappointments teach—
 To be content, nor strive beyond our reach.

Yes, rebel heart! no vainly murmuring sighs—
 No aping that which should, but cannot be—
 No fond desires, for some restrained prize—
 No envious achings for another's glee;
 Just beat—come weal or woe—come foe or friend—
 Just beat and bide—God finds the fittest end.

A. STONEHEWER.

AT TRAIISA.

How fair are all things here,
 How pure a face how dear
 Doth Nature wear,
 The narrow meadow sward
 Scarce fifty paces broad,
 The living air!

The ring of lilies, then
 The beeches round the glen
 That gently sway,
 And last the darker shade
 Of pine trees, as the glade
 Winds far away.

The glen is pure and bright,
 And shineth with the light
 Of Heaven's own grace.
 Sure, angels if they roam,
 Might come and feel at home
 In such a place.

A. D.

SONG.

A star in the night,
 A beam on the sea,
 A sound in the silence,
 A bud on the tree;
 And darkness and winter are over,
 And sorrow and sadness will flee.

Oh, the sin of the world!
 How drear and how strong
 As it sweeps like a storm
 Its dread course along:
 How it darkens and terrifies souls;
 How it silences music and song.

Oh, the woes of the world!
 The grief and the pain,
 The thirst all unquenched,
 The tears of salt rain:
 Shall the sorrow and shame pass away,
 And hope's peaceful day dawn again?

A star in the night,
 A beam on the sea,
 A sound in the silence,
 A bud on the tree;
 And darkness and winter are over,
 And sighing and sadness will flee.

There's hope for the world
 'Mid its sorrow and care,
 In the love that endures
 And will not despair,
 In the love of each man for his brother,
 In God's love for those suffering there.

Aye, there's hope for the world!
 Though the storm rages high,
 The darkness is breaking,
 And dawn draweth nigh:
 There's a voice through the silence that calleth:
 "My children, hope on: It is I."

A. D.

CHATTERTON.

THE life of Chatterton is without a parallel in the whole of English literature. It is in vain we search for another wherewith to compare it—it stands wholly alone. His life has combined in it all the interest of a novel, a tragedy, an epic. Like a novel we read it without tiring, and in fact as we read, the plot gathers and thickens about us, and while our faculties are on the tiptoe of expectation, we find ourselves suddenly at the *end*, which comes upon us so sadly, so unexpectedly, that we are left without the relief of tears. To our thinking the life of Chatterton is eminently a novel in *one volume*, so to speak. The strength of his manhood and the maturity of his old age are volumes of his life that are lost to the world, or rather, that never have been printed on the page of the world's history. All that we have of Chatterton is only a fragment of what should have been a noble work. True this fragment is grand and attractive to a degree; but then, there is no getting over the fact that it is a *ruin*. As an unfinished work appeals to the imagination, so does this life unfinished of Chatterton appeal to the sensitive human heart. It tells us—and alas! that it should—of noble hopes cherished and blighted, of merits all unacknowledged and despised, of lofty imaginative dreams unbodied, and sweet joys entirely untasted. His youth—and, sooth, that is all of him—is perfectly novel when we come to contrast it with the early years of men of genius generally. The real novelty of his life lies in this—that while some great men have in their youth been clever and even extraordinary, Chatterton was essentially a boy of genius; and strange to say, while yet a mere boy, with a confirmed thirst for fame and literary glory, and dowered with an imagination brimful and running over with lofty ideas and conceptions of the beautiful. Mrs. Hemans wrote verses at eleven, but on the whole they are trivial, and little more than might have been expected from an acute and clever girl possessing a faculty for stringing rhymes together. Pope and Cowley, too—the one at twelve, and the other at fifteen—gave, thus early, a prelude to their after greatness; but when the full flowing river of song poured into their hearts, they then confessed that hitherto they had but “lispéd in numbers.” With Chatterton, however, young as

he was, there was no lisping, no imperfect utterance, no mistaking his meaning. He began his career by stringing his lyre to no mean themes; he was possessed by no sickly sentimentality, he was neither a "spooney" nor a babbler about love. At the age when the feathers of other poets are just beginning to manifest themselves his were fully grown, and at once he tucked them out for a flight so daring that in the empyrean of poetry it is but seldom attempted at all. No less solemn and grand a theme, indeed, than man's utter sinfulness and God's infinite mercy was it that engaged the mind of this peculiar child. Strange stanzas these to emanate from the brain of an obscure Bristol boy—strangely holy thoughts these for a charity boy to have:—

"Almighty framer of the skies,
 Oh! let our pure devotion rise
 Like incense in Thy sight;
 Wrapt in impenetrable shade
 The texture of our souls was made,
 Till Thy command gave light.

"How shall we celebrate the day
 When God appeared in mortal clay,
 The mark of worldly scorn—
 When the Archangel's heavenly lays
 Attempted the Redeemer's praise,
 And hailed Salvation's morn?

"A humble form the Godhead wore,
 The pains of poverty He bore,
 To gaudy pomp unknown;
 Though in a human walk He trode,
 Still was the man Almighty God,
 In glory all His own.

"Despised, oppressed, the Godhead bears,
 The torments of this vale of tears,
 Nor bids His vengeance rise;
 He saw the creatures He had made
 Revile His power, His peace invade,
 He saw with mercy's eyes."

Yes, strangely holy stanzas these, such as are neither to be quickly

read nor abruptly put aside: they would be an honourable feather in the cap of any man of genius, not to speak of a simple lad at school.

But while the life of Chatterton is highly novel, it is also eminently a tragedy, and a real one, too, with not a bit of farce in the whole piece—a real tragedy, where men and women are the players—and where an ardent mind and glowing spirit pay the penalty to cold neglect and withering scorn. It is such a tragedy that its *denouement* makes our very life-strings quiver and bleed, our every pulse beat quicker, our every vein run fuller, and our breathing slow and heavy. The *fall of the curtain* in the life of the boy-poet overcasts the human soul with feelings of unutterable sadness, and makes the world look awfully blank and cold, and the heart of man conceited, callous, and wicked. The fact is we are left too sad to weep and too hopeful to mourn. But, while the life we sketch is thus tragic, it has much of the noble interest about it which pervades an epic poem. The immaturity of his years, the might of his endeavours, and the peculiar oneness of his position in the literary arena, make him, in the eyes of the world, almost what it knows by the name of a hero. But, without more introduction, let us relate the story of his wonderful seventeen years' existence in the world.

The Chatterton family had for many years been the sextons of St. Mary's Redcliffe, in Bristol; but somehow the office wore out of the hands of the family, and the father of Chatterton became a teacher in one of the schools in town. The boy never knew what paternal affection was, his father having died three months before his birth. Of the character of Chatterton's father various opinions exist; the most trustworthy appears to be that which makes him, though somewhat clever and shrewd, nevertheless dissipated to a degree, and not altogether particular about the company he kept. This may in no way prejudice the mind of the reader against the boy-poet. We remark by the way that it seems to be a natural fact—not without its exceptions, of course, but confirmed by a long series of observation—that in a case of inherited genius it generally passes from the mother to the son, and from the father to the daughter. Although Professor Wilson had a family of sons, it was his daughter that wrote his biography; and the same thing is illustrated

in the case of Sir David Brewster, whose *memoir* appeared a few years ago, also edited by his daughter. Having made the suggestion we have no doubt our readers will be able to amplify or verify the fact for themselves. This is, of course, by the way.

The mother of Chatterton seems to have been a woman of gentle and amiable disposition, and of a temper at once sweet and generous, although somewhat inclined to melancholy. Thomas was born in the month of August, 1752.

At the age of five years the boy to all appearances was a hopeless "stupe"—a remarkable dunce. There was no getting him to learn his letters: the mother of Thomas was quite in despair about her boy, until he was six years and a-half she thought him to be an absolute fool, and often, when on the point of correcting him, told him so. This state of matters, however, was not to last long: soon a change came over the spirit of his foolery. This change was wrought by what, think you? Of course you at once suggest some flaxen-haired Bristol beauty; but we must tell you it was nothing of the kind, but by no less sentimental an object than an old black-letter Bible—so early does his taste for the antique seem to have been developed. An anecdote is told of the boy at this time which is so characteristic that we tell it here again. A manufacturer was going to give Thomas a present of some trifle or other—a china cup, or some trumpery of that sort—and asked the boy what he would like inscribed upon it. "Paint me," said the boy-poet—"paint me an angel, with wings and a trumpet; to trumpet my name over the world."

From 1760 to 1767, Chatterton was an inmate of a charitable institution in Bristol, called Colston's School. The intellectual pabulum furnished him here was of the plainest kind, but his mind was now ever on the alert to pick up scraps of knowledge from all quarters. The boy's intense love of reading was such that nothing could come amiss to him. An old Chaucer or Churchill, an antiquated theological treatise or a dilapidated history, were to him equally welcome, and devoured with the keenest relish. It was in these charity-school days of his, too, that he saw himself decked out in all the glory of type. *Felix Fairley's Bristol Newspaper* was the organ of the town, and in it Chatterton's earliest poetic endeavours appeared. Apart from a certain peculiarity of subject,

there is nothing very remarkable in these first effusions even for a clever ten year old ; but, once fairly commenced, there is something very remarkable in the rapidity with which he strode to poetic perfection. At Colston's school, too, the boy's character began to show some very striking peculiarities. He now loved to be alone, and used to spend all his spare time in sitting, for hours and hours together, in the lumber room of his mother's house, where were stowed away many of the old St. Mary's Church parchments.

In July, 1767, he was apprenticed to Mr. Lambert, a Bristol attorney. His office hours were of the longest—from eight in the morning till eight in the evening. Unfortunately Mr. Lambert's business was not of the most extensive nature, and the apprentice was left to fill up his time as much as he pleased. At his desk he amused himself by writing lampoons and anonymous letters. One of the latter was traced to its author, and the person of the unfortunate clerk had to endure chastisement from the hands of his master. But even in the town of Bristol, and labouring under the evil star of low birth, Chatterton was destined to become famous.

Mr. Barrett, a surgeon, at this time had undertaken to write a history of Bristol. Chatterton knew that he lacked information respecting the ancient churches of the town, and, burning with antiquarian enthusiasm, volunteered to aid the muddled historian. The attorney's apprentice was reputed to be the possessor of some very old and valuable MSS., and doubtless they must have been of a very extensive nature, for the lad furnished the historian with the most valuable information on every conceivable topic connected with the history of ancient Bristol. The historian could not well account for the wondrous knowledge betrayed by the lawyer's apprentice, nevertheless, he was forced to acknowledge his great obligation to the young man, and in this manner various half-guineas found their way into the pocket of the ex-charity scholar. The sources from which Chatterton derived his information he held to be certain old MSS. discovered by him, in an iron chest in the muniment room of St. Mary, Redcliffe Church. The chest was reported to have belonged to a former priest of the church—"Master Canyinge"—and certainly, from his own statement, Chatterton must have found it perfectly crammed with works of the rarest

description. Whenever Barrett was at a loss for the "needful" in the way of information, down went the arm of the attorney's apprentice into the chest, and up came another manuscript of the most astonishing character, and supplying, of course, in full, the information required. In this way were brought to light whole biographies of the illustrious dead of Bristol. Painters never before heard of, poets and their works long unknown to fame, warriors of the most uncommon daring, and glass-stainers of the rarest artistic skill sprung into new life, and light, and fame. Chatterton and his wonderful MSS. soon became the talk of the town.

But Chatterton was beginning to get tired of Bristol and its quiet-going inhabitants. Genius was beginning to get self-conscious of its own power within him, and already the little great men of Bristol—the Calcott's, the Harises, and Aldermen—he had learned in his heart to despise, and in many ways was not at all slow to show in what light he regarded them. The all-absorbing idea of Chatterton was now how to get out of Bristol. Once again he plunged his arm into the wonderful iron chest and fished up an old dramatic piece written by one Rowley, a priest of Bristol, who had lived in the reigns of Henry VI. and Edward IV. He acquainted Dodsley, the London publisher, with his wonderful discovery. Dodsley, however, fought shy of the new literary aspirant. Foiled in his first attempt, Chatterton did not despair. Horace Walpole at this time was at the height of his fame, and in such a position that he could benefit a man with real merit. Chatterton thought that this was the very man whose patronage he needed, so he at once sent off to Walpole a contribution to a work on which he was then engaged, called "Anecdotes of Painters in England." With Chatterton's contribution Walpole was quite struck, and replied to Chatterton as an equal in station, and in the most flattering way possible, hoping in the future to be able to cultivate Chatterton's acquaintance, and asking interestedly where the Rowley poems were to be found.

—Walpole was completely entrapped, or rather, let us say, was from this letter of his certainly committed to a course of action which towards Chatterton ought at least to have been honourable. Chatterton after receiving Walpole's letter at once sent off to him further information and extracts from the "Historie of Peyncters

ny England, bie T. Rowley," with a specimen of some of the Rowley poems, and also a complete and confidential account of his own life and prospects. This frank confession of Chatterton's sealed his doom, so far at least as he was to expect aid from this London man of letters. Walpole read over Chatterton's letter, felt disgusted he had deigned to correspond with an ex-charity boy, and being not at all pleased with himself for not discerning at the first that the poems sent him had without doubt been written by this Bristol lad himself, in the heat of the moment he wrote off to Chatterton advising him, like a good boy, to "stick fast to his desk." Of course we would infer from this course of action of Walpole's that he was perfectly incapable of perpetrating any such literary delinquency himself. He regarded Chatterton's work a heinous crime. Well, just such another crime he himself had committed; his "Castle of Otranto" he published in England as a pretended translation from a black-letter volume published at Naples, 1529. Such was the nature of the man into whose hands fate threw the boy-poet. Was there ever such a case of literary snobbishness? Thinking over Walpole's conduct, we are reminded of a joke of wine-bibbing Porson—"Such a man ought to be kicked by an ass, and we wish we were the ass to do it."

Had Chatterton been an ordinary lad this rebuff of Walpole's would possibly have quieted him for ever; but, being not an ordinary, but a very extraordinary lad, and feeling confident of the strength of his own powers, he resolved to make a third, final, and deciding attempt to win position and fame. London, of course, he selected as the scene of his future labours, and on the 24th of April, 1770, thither he repaired. To commence life in London he was furnished with the following stock-in-trade;—A scanty wardrobe, about five guineas in money, and the following poems—"Ella," "The Bristowe Tragedie," "The Tournament," &c. Such were the goods and chattels wherewith he had undertaken to set the "Thames on fire," and satiate his thirst for fame! After this, what wonder, we say, that the Bristol folks should call him the "mad genius?" Chatterton took up his residence with some relatives of his own, and old friends of his mother's, at Shoreditch, and once fairly settled in the heart of a large and bustling city, he resolved to make a fair stand-up fight for honour and station.

On the day after his arrival in London, he managed to obtain interviews with the editors of the chief leading journals and newspapers, and in the course of a month he was no stranger in the Chapter and the other famous coffee-houses then frequented by all the wits and *literati* of the town, although we suppose in these resorts his orders to the waiters would be anything but of the most positive nature.

There is something to move the sympathetic heart to tears in the fact that, while he was earning only the merest pittance from the booksellers, he made out to write in the following strain to his sister:—"My present profession obliges me to frequent the best places of resort. I employ my money now in fitting myself fashionably and in getting into good company. . . . Assure yourself every month will end to your advantage. I will send you two silks this summer, and expect in answer to this what colours you prefer. My mother shall not be forgotten." And so on.

But while Chatterton was contributing poems and essays to the various magazines, the boy was actually entertaining thoughts of political glory and distinction. By his letters he had managed to get into the good graces of Beckford, then Lord Mayor of London, and of this connection he expected to reap much fruit. Unfortunately, however, the Lord Mayor died, and political writing then bringing more fame than money, he had to forsake this road to greatness. At this time, in a letter to his sister, he made the following confession:—"If money flowed on me as fast as honors, I would give you a portion of £5,000."

The earnings of the literary aspirant for his first two months' work in London have been estimated at about £10; but whatever they were there can be no doubt they were sadly out of proportion to the amount of work done, and less doubt that all the while the lad was going entirely beyond his powers. The testimony of his Shoreditch relations was that he used to sit up very late every night, sometimes till between three and four, writing and reading; indeed they thought he was a *spirit*, and never slept at all. Nor did he make up by plundering from his day's work what he had given to the night's study; his morning hours were of the earliest. After he had stayed nine weeks at Shoreditch he removed to Brook Street, Holborn. There he continued to work as usual. He could

not but work. His brain was continually in a fever of excitement. Beautiful visions of far-off lands, especially of Africa, were always before his burning imagination and filling it up. They were only to him in that dreary London wilderness too like the desert mirage—they were “beautiful exceedingly,” but oh! they were not real. Chatterton’s intellect could draw food to itself from all sources, while at the same time his physical constitution was breaking down for want of proper nourishment. In the long run the proceeds of his pen could not provide the barest necessities, and his pride—“his damned, native, unconquerable pride,” he called it himself—would not allow him to live on charity. For the baffled soul there was only one alternative—to live on charity, OR TO STARVE. One other attempt to secure a living as surgeon’s mate in a ship bound for Africa failed also. It seemed as if help, hope, and friends had flown away together, and left him desolate.

“Then black despair,
The shadow of a starless night was thrown
Over the earth in which he moved alone.”

On the 24th of August, 1770, Chatterton closed his life of misery and defeat. Arsenic was the means employed. He found a pauper’s grave in Shoe Lane.

Such is a brief account of the life and struggles of this marvelous youth. And when we come to its close, while we feel all the time how vain are the thoughts, we cannot help conjecturing what might have been had circumstances been more favourable. We will ask ourselves somehow—Had the boy only met Hannah More at Bristol—had he only had an introduction to the kind-hearted Oliver Goldsmith—had he only exercised more patience and self-control—would the whole character of his life not have been changed? But what his life might have been we leave altogether out of our imagination. What it was, we know, and this ends all conjecture. Of his moral and religious character our space will hardly admit us to speak—suffice it to say that for his religion he trusted to his intellect, and by excess of light he was led astray. His moral character has on the whole been too severely handled; but certainly, it must be confessed, there were those in Bristol who should neither have been sorry nor otherwise at the boy’s departure for London. He should not have known such at all.

However, let us now estimate his character in the spirit of that sentence he himself wrote, and wished carved on his tombstone:—

“Reader, judge not: if thou art a Christian—believe that he shall be judged by a Supreme Power;—to that Power alone he is now answerable.”

BERNARD WAYDE.

IANTHE.

BY LEONARD LLOYD.

“Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher,
Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.”

SCENE I.—*The Sea Shore.*—*Early morning*—CUTHBERT *pacing the sands.*

“VANITY of vanities, was sung of old
By one inspired, all things are vanity,
And there is nought to profit 'neath the sun!”—
Methinks the world hath grown no wiser yet,
For man is just as wearied with his life
And pleasures pall as easily. Ah me!
Would lagging Death would come and lay his hand
Upon my burning brow that I might rest
And maybe find oblivion! for this life
Which boasts its kingdom in each painful pulse,
Each kindling thought, each word that leaves my lips
Though loath to utterance, every hope and sigh,
And slightest movement of these listless limbs,
Is but a prolongation of my pain,
Adding each day new sins and sufferings
To millions mourned already, till I fain
Would bare my breast and with a lightened heart
Bid the destroyer welcome!—What is here?

(*Stoops for a paper.*)

Some poet wandering forth at eventide
Hath loosed his throbbing thoughts it seems in song,
Then tossed them to the winds.

(*Reads.*)

“Give me a heart whose tendrils shall entwine
Closely around mine own with love sincere!

"Give me a heart whose pulses beat with mine
In passion's purity as year on year
Outlives its youth, grows grey, and finds a bier
Strewn with the sighs and sobs of those who pine
For perished pleasures, and high hopes they see
Scattered like blast-torn blooms which wither lingeringly!

"Give me a heart that yearns toward the good!
That flees from evil, panting for the pure
And the eternal, sipping honeyed food
From nature and from solitude, secure
In simple faith nor heeding sinful lure
To win it from its melancholy mood
To live on laughter and to vaunt of vice
As soothing human souls in pleasant paradise!

"Give me a heart that having known passed pain
Shall greet me with sweet sympathy when sad!
Yet when the light breaks, and I smile again
To see the stony path with verdure clad,
Shall change with mine own mood from grave to glad,
And constant through all changes shall remain;
A heart that throbs with love for me alone,
Whose melody shall intermingle with mine own!"

'Tis an old tale—a soul unsatisfied,
That craves for human sympathy. Alas!
Life is a dreary waste unless 'tis lit
By the pure light of love! We have a round
Of daily duties, and we grope our way
Amid the darkness, like lone ships at sea
Breasting the laughing billows, till we stand
Without the slightest warning face to face
With the one-being who must make or mar
The music of our lives; then God help those
Where Death or falsehood comes between! for earth
Hath nothing worth the giving after that
Except an early grave, where memory
Of sin and sorrow and of all passed pain

Perchance shall lie entombéd with the heart
 That broke beneath their burden.—Long ago,
 In the first springtide of my youth, when life
 Was full of laughter, I could jest at love
 In merry mocking tones, and heart-whole look
 Upon the beautiful; but when *she* came,
 My little Mabel, with her artless wiles
 And innocence of early maidenhood,
 Love crept into my heart and nestled there
 Unbidden, yet unchecked. But she is dead!
 And lying in her grass-grown grave.—Oh God!
 Were there not angels in your heaven enough
 That you must snatch my darling from mine arms,
 Close those blue eyes and dainty laughing lips,
 Still the quick throbbing of a heart which beat
 In melody with mine, and claim the breath
 Of the one being in the whole wide world
 That yet was left to lavish love upon? (*A pause.*)

How the sea moans
 In musical monotony, and on its bed
 Tosseth like one bereft of his beloved
 Who cannot find forgetfulness.—Methinks
 The Sea is a sweet comforter, for I have found
 More consolation in its murmurings
 Than in the clamorous sympathy of men:
 And often when the shadow of the night
 Was cast upon the cities, and the heavens
 Star-studded, I have told my tale of life,
 And love, and losses to it as it lay
 And listened at my feet, while with soft sighs,
 And kisses, and low whisperings it hath soothed
 Mine aching sense of pain—Oh mighty sea
 When death comes to me let me lay my head
 Upon your lap and sleep!—

'Tis scarce three years
 Since the earth sheltered Mabel.—By her grave
 I stood as in a dream, nor sigh nor sob
 Broke from my parchéd lips when she was hid

For ever from my sight. I cannot tell
If any wept for her or aught was said
Of sympathy and comfort, but it seems
When the last sod was laid upon my love
They led me unresisting as a child
To my lone home again.—Then, when night fell
And I was left alone, the light broke in
Upon my sleeping senses, and the truth
Like tongues of fire flamed fiercely to my heart
And burnt into my brain, until I rose,
Crept all unnoticed to my darling's grave
And laid me down and called her, while o'erhead
The willow shiv'ring in the wintry blast
Scattered its dead leaves round me, and the sobs
Of the fast falling rain mingled with those
Which broke from my torn heart and shook my frame
Convulsively.—

Yes it is scarce three years;
And still the wound Death dealt me when he snatched
My Mabel from the strength of sheltering arms,
Which would have held her clasped in close caress
Defiantly, is only partly healed,
Nor ever will be wholly, yet I find
A new love springing up beside the old,
Like daisies on the grave of one long dead.
And shall I bury memory to make
Ianthe *my* Ianthe? shall these lips
Linger on hers while in each others arms
We languish love-locked? will there never come
The shadow of passed bliss and stealthily
Stealing between us haunt my heart with thoughts
Of olden loves and pleasures? shall I lie
With mine arms round her sleeping while my eyes
Are dreaming that they look upon the love
I lost long years ago?—Yet wherefore not?
Ianthe need not know, and she will make
My lot less lonely; when the sun hath set
I'll seek and tell her so.

MNEMOSYNE.

WITH folded footsteps silently
 Stole she, my love Mnemosyne,
 Above my life;
 Her eyes were turned full deep to me
 With pathos mingled tearfully
 And passion-strife.

Within one hand a Lily white
 Swayed tremulous beneath the might
 Of her heart's breath,
 As I bent 'neath the wond'rous light
 Of eyes acquaint with dusky night
 And shades of death.

Upon her other palm she bore
 A broken vow and olden store,
 And treasure-gain,
 Which bending meekly down before
 She kissed, as if her heart were sore
 With passion-pain;

And kissed again, then looked at me
 That I might long regretfully
 For that passed vow;
 That I might long all wearily
 To join it as it need to be
 And should be now;

To hold it that I might define
 The hushed depth of her dark eyes' shine
 Solemnity;
 That I might feel her lips' incline
 Had trembled closely down to mine
 And were for me.

Around her face there lay the shade
Of pledging vows that I had made
 With sweet commands ;
Of moon-girt paths where we had strayed,
Of silent homes where we had prayed
 With close-clasped hands :

And with the breath of her soft breath
There flooded through the pale of death
 Our olden speech,
Like evening dusk that gathereth
The last sun-glow which lingereth
 God's night to reach.

She passed her cold, white hand to me,
My pale, pale love Mnemosyne,
 Still lingering,
And showed me there as memory
Of link I'd said all true should be,
 A dark, hair ring :

Then 'tween the lips, lost rosy-red,
Her sobbing breath forth swiftly sped
 With troublous pause,
And bending low to me her head
With piteous eyes and voice she said
 " My love, that was ! "

Oh ! quietude, great quietude,
In which before-time I had stood
 So much alone ;
Oh ! better thousand times I could
Bear all the grief of solitude
 Than that sad tone.

Oh ! love, in passioned woe I bent
With craving, overcome intent
 To weep like this,
As through the quiet air I sent
One pleading cry of wild content,
 " My love that is ! "

Ah! then the same as long ago
 Came clinging hands, and eyes bent low,
 And lips to mine,
 As through the air your cry joyed so,
 "My love, I thank thee that I know
 I still am thine!"

With folded footsteps, soft to move,
 And white stoled beauty, like a dove,
 All silently,
 Yet dost thou watch and wait above,
 For pity's sake, my lost, lost love,
 Mnemosyne.

ALTEN RETRAC

TO ———

FORGIVE you for the wrong you wrought?
 Forgive you for the life you wrecked?
 Forgive you—though you came unsought
 With lying lips you wisely thought
 My innocence would not detect?

Forgive you for your sin, you say!
 "Forgive"—though when we parted last
 I flung mine arms to Heaven to pray
 My curse might haunt you night and day
 In memory of the Past.

Forgive you!--though with winning wile
 You offered love my lot to leaven?
 Forgive you!--though with hidden guile
 With soft caress and sunny smile
 You stole my hope, my God, my heaven.

Forgive you!--ah there was no need
 To ask me that, for love must live
 When once a hand hath sown the seed—
 And though the heart may pant and bleed
 Strong love will force it to forgive.

F. N.

ANSWER TO "SCATTERED SONGS,"

In the POET'S MAGAZINE of August.

YES, there's hope in your singing! the sunlight is here
 To fling his bright beams on the thoughts that are dear,
 To brighten the canvass that fills out the sail,
 To rest on the seraph wing guiding the gale.

There's hope in your singing! we cannot conceal
 The flowers that the Spring-time and Summer reveal,
 As the note of the song-bird confined in the cage
 Only hid by the cover's the light of each page.

There's hope in your singing! the sunlight is here
 To silence the night time of doubting and fear,
 To sprinkle the rose leaves of Poesy's dream
 With the dew gems of gladness from memory's stream.

The sea bird that flieth 'twixt ocean and sky
 We sometimes seem thinking is soaring too high,
 But his efforts are aided by strength from afar
 Till the wing of the white bird unites with the star.

So we watch the bright soaring of Poesy's flight
 O'er its daybreak of ocean, its star-dreams of night,
 And we pray the same light may its teachings inspire
 Till its wide wealth of beauty be all we desire.

D. M. GILL.

DANTE.

PART II.

WAS the influence which Beatrice exerted upon Dante merely transient? Was all this innocent adoration only the fleeting effervescence of youthful enthusiasm? and were those last words with which he closed the narrative of this interesting passion a mere visionary dream which the stern realities of mature life would scatter into fragments? No. She was the one pure transcendent

figure which floated before his imagination in all the struggles of his existence. It was her image which cheered him, strengthened him in dark fortune and in bright, in all his scholastic labours, amidst the turbulent distractions of active life, amidst the senseless ingratitude of his townsmen, amidst the discouragements of poverty, in the lonely desolation of exile. It was her image which excited the eternal yearnings of his heart, which ennobled his ambition, exalted his aims, refined and modified his genius, and made him consecrate his energies in order to attain a crown of immortality. Henceforth she is to him the embodiment of all purity, gracefulness, goodness, wisdom, philosophy, theology, virtue, truth. He finds her in Paradise, "her brow reflecting a wreath of eternal beams," and says:—

"O Lady! thou in whom my hopes have rest;
 Who for my safety hast not scorn'd in hell
 To leave the traces of thy footsteps mark'd;
 For all mine eyes have seen. I to thy power
 And goodness, virtue owe and grace. A slave—
 Thou hast to freedom brought me; and no means,
 For my deliverance apt, hast left untried."

Par. Canto xxxi., 71.

But you must not think that his early life was spent exclusively in sentimental dreams, amidst the revolutionary struggles of his country. No. The year before the death of Beatrice Patinari, he distinguished himself in the battle of Campaldi, one of the most celebrated battles of Florentine history, in which the Florentines defeated the Ghibbelines of Arezzo. In the autumn of the following sad year he served in the war waged by Florence against Pisa, and was present at the surrender of the castle of Caprona—if we may believe his own testimony in the 21st Canto of the *Inferno*.

The next ten years were the most eventful in the poet's life. He took an active part in all the vivid movements which agitated his beloved birth-place; and exercised a very prominent influence in its government. His abilities were too commanding for even those mercenary, power-loving nobles to disregard: and, therefore, his eloquence and wisdom were of much use to his townsmen amidst the conflicts of that time. It was not a fussy, noisy, obtrusive in-

terference his, like that of some petty parochial potentate of our day, who is continually struggling after ephemeral notoriety, but has not strength enough to command respect or to maintain power—but a calm, stern, life-absorbing interest, coveted not for its own sake, but for the sake of his distracted country. He was a very eloquent man; but he was not fond of speech. His strength and usefulness did not evaporate in mere words. He felt that he had a more solemn duty to perform in this world than to chatter.

Boccaccio says that no legation was heard or answered, no law reformed, none departed from, no peace made, no public war undertaken, and, in brief, no deliberation having any weight was held in which he had not a voice.

The year after the death of Beatrice, in order to dispel the melancholy which afflicted his soul, his friends persuaded him to marry Gemma Donati, who does not seem to have turned out the most congenial partner in the world. The opinion of her merits is not quite universally unfavourable; but the great majority of his biographers agree in accusing her of a very bad temper, not the most trifling annoyance to a sensitive spirit. In the year 1300 Dante became Prior, one of the chief magistrates of Florence, during two of the summer months, a time distinguished for all the tumultuous evils which a wild ambition, unlicensed freedom, and the most exasperated party-spirit could excite. The century opened out in Florence on a new scene of partizan conflict and social quarrels—in which the actors are different, and watchwords of each party, but of which the real legitimate root is the same as ever.

There was a powerful and wealthy family of the Cancellieri, residing in Pistoia, which, “from over-fatness and inspiration of the devil,” as Villani says, had become torn into two great divisions, one of them sprung from the first, and the other from the second wife of the same common ancestor. The increase of wealth only tended to magnify their discord. They hated each other with implacable animosity. One party with supercilious insolence called themselves the “Bianchi” the Whites, after the name of their mother; and the other, in order to show the spiteful bitterness of their hostility, chose a name the very antipodes of it: they called themselves the “Neri,” the Blacks; and the troubles and the bloodshed they caused to that little boisterous blood-stained community were so

outrageous that they were invited to Florence, thinking it would put a stop to it ; but it only tended to aggravate the animosities which were existing between two of the greatest families there. The Bianchi joined the family of Vieri de Cerchi, a rich old merchant, kind-hearted, liberal-minded, and with a frankness which conciliated the affections of the great body of the people. The remnant of the old Ghibbeline families joined themselves to the Guelf Bianchi, under this prudent worthy old merchant. To them also belonged the great body of the people ; so did Dante, passionately and with intense exclusiveness, for it was the party of liberty, of progress, and of patriotism. The Neri attached themselves to the party of Corso Donati, a handsome and eloquent nobleman, but of a haughty, avaricious, over-bearing, supercilious disposition, looking with unbounded jealousy and envy upon the opulence, and with sardonic contempt upon the origin of the worthy merchant. We cannot expatiate on the quarrels of those families, and their parties who adopt the titles of Neri and Bianchi. On account of their lawless outrages it was found necessary, during Dante's Priorship, with more impartiality than justice, to banish the leaders of the two parties from the city. The Neri tried to persuade Boniface VIII. to interfere in their behalf. Corso Donati fled to that cunning, haughty potentate to support their request. The Signory sent three citizens, of whom Dante was one, to plead the cause of the Florentine citizens at the feet of the ambitious pontiff, who, the chronicles say, "crept into his sacred office by the arts of the fox, ruled while he occupied it with the ferocity of a lion, and quitted it by the death of a dog." Dante was unsuccessful in his efforts, and leaving Rome with a saddened and disappointed heart, never more returned to his native city.

The avaricious Boniface introduced a French prince, Charles of Valois, into Italy, in the name of peace and liberty and religion, but really for the purpose of crushing a nation's noblest aspirations, and promoting his own selfish aggrandisement. His entrance into Florence was the signal for a multitude of terrible atrocities. The Bianchi were banished,—Dante amongst them. His house was burned and pillaged ; he was summoned to answer a number of charges ; and, without having time to appear, was condemned in January, 1302, to a heavy fine (8,000 lire) and two years banish-

ment—in March and April, to perpetual banishment, and to be *burned alive* should he return.

The lover, the orator, the statesman, the patriot, the most accomplished, the largest-minded, noblest-hearted man that the world at that time possessed was condemned to be an exile, to consume his heart in lonely isolation from all that he loved and honoured, to have his lofty spirit oppressed by the dark and discouraging clouds which enveloped his country, and to experience in various wanderings, the bitterness of the bread of charity, and the weary labour of passing up and down a stranger's stairs.—(Par. xvii., 59.)

For one and twenty years he wandered up and down amongst the mountains and monasteries of his country, with as deep and inextinguishable an affection for his native land and his native city, and as lofty yearnings for its future destiny and glory, as ever ennobled the breast of mortal. We cannot have a more graphic description of his sufferings and struggles than his own words: "Alas," said he, "had it pleased the Dispenser of the Universe that the occasion of this excuse had never existed, that neither others had committed wrong against me, nor I suffered unjustly; suffered, I say, the punishment of exile and poverty; since it was the pleasure of the citizens of that fairest and most renowned, daughter of Rome, Florence, to cast me forth out of her inmost bosom, in which I had my birth and nourishment even to the ripeness of my age; and in which, with her good will, I desire, with all my heart, to rest this wearied spirit of mine, and to terminate the time allotted to me on earth. Wandering over almost every part, to which this our language extends, I have gone about like a mendicant. . . . I have, indeed, been a vessel without sail and without steerage, carried about to divers ports, and roads, and shores, by the dry wind that springs out of sad poverty. We are not able now to expatiate on his political views—on the illustrious destiny which it was the absorbing passion of his soul to see his country realise. We can only say this,—that the great, transcendent aim of his efforts, the one absorbing object of his existence, was Unity. He wished to see the human family united by one solemn overwhelming feeling of mutual responsibility—every bosom to be vibrating with one aim, desire, purpose, affection—a Unity which is taught by the manifest operations of the

universe in which we live—revealed in the visible Creation around us, in all God's works. He wished his own country to be the bright beacon which all other nations might reverently follow—the source of life, and guidance, and government, which all other nations might affectionately obey; and the City of Rome itself to be the sacred centre of universal empire—to be the great centre from which religious duty should receive direction, and the seat of a Roman Emperor, whose behests should be universally obeyed. That even the very speech of his countrymen should not be corrupted with the idiomatic mixture of a foreign tongue; while he himself showed them in his own compositions, that it possessed a beauty, a sweetness, a melody, and a power, of which the wisest amongst them hitherto had no suspicion.

The year after the last cruel sentence of banishment had been issued, his heart burst forth into rapturous exultation at the prospect of seeing the bright visions and patriotic dreams of his soul to some extent realised.—Hen. vii. Henry of Luxembourg, Emperor of Germany, is the blessed messenger, who is to establish his kingdom of peace, and wisdom, and unity, for which his soul yearns. With burning impatience he tries to accelerate his approach. He employs all his persuasive eloquence, his vehement fervour—all the passionate energies of body and soul to urge him to the entrance. He addresses him with all the loving melody of his speech, with the imploring solicitations of his eager heart, and his whole being is exalted with jubilant and triumphant rapture at the certain prospect of the abrogation of all wrong and discord, of the hearty annihilation of political and Ecclesiastical scandal, and the introduction of peace, and unity, and justice, and liberty, and righteousness, and truth. But, alas! he who was to be the instrument of such a blessed revolution in the condition of his country and of Europe is transferred to another world, and Dante's soul is crushed with grief and disappointment of the blackest night. To be bereft of this hope was to him an indescribable desolation. For many years he must wander amongst the oppressive solitudes of his beloved country, moralising on the manifold mutabilities of human life, sickening over the political discords and injustices of his country, his heart revolting at the unhallowed avarice, and unseemly schisms of Ecclesiastical potentates,

haunted by visions of the sainted Beatrice and dreams of immortal glory; and, as it were, weaving the emotions of his mighty spirit into melodious language of unfathomable power and beauty—scornfully brooding over his country's discords in such words of overwhelming bitterness as these:—

“Ah, slavish Italy! thou Sun of grief!
 Vessel without a pilot in loud storm!
 Lady no longer of fair provinces,
 But brothel-house impure! This gentle spirit,
 Even from the pleasant sound of his dear land
 Was prompt to greet a fellow citizen
 With such glad cheer, while now thy living ones
 In thee abide not without war; and one
 Malicious gnaws another; ay, of those
 Whom the same wall and the same moat contains.
 Seek, wretched one! around thy sea-coasts wide;
 Then homeward to thy bosom turn; and mark,
 If any part of thee sweet peace enjoy.”

After sixteen years of exile, his fellow-citizens gave him leave to return on conditions which Dante's patriotic spirit rejected with scorn; “Is this then, the glorious path by which Dante Alighieri is recalled to his country after the sufferings of an exile which has lasted almost fifteen years? Is this, the reward of his innocence clear to all? This the result of the sweat and toil endured in his studies? Far from the man who has made Philosophy his friend be such baseness; worthy only of a degraded heart to consent, even as a certain Ciolo, and other men of ill-fame, to be ransomed like a prisoner! Far be it from the man, the apostle of justice—the man insulted and offended—to pay a tribute to his offenders, even as though they were his benefactors. This is not the road by which to return to our country; but if you find a path which will not stain Dante's honour, he will accept it immediately. But if there be no honorable path to Florence, he will never enter into Florence. What! can I not behold the sun and stars from every corner of the earth? Can I not meditate on sweetest truth from every region under heaven, if I do not by my own act strip myself of every glory; ay, render myself ignominious to the people and city of Florence? Bread, at least, will not be wanting.”

It is said that as he was wandering across the mountains of Lunigiana, bowed down with the burden which oppressed his soul, he knocked at the gate of the monastery of Sante Croce del Corvo. The monk who opened it read at a single glance all the long history of misery in the lean pale face of the stranger. "What do you seek here?" said he. With a look of indescribable sadness, into which, to some extent, were condensed all the trouble and sufferings of his previous history, he answered—"Peace." But there was no peace for his earnest soul in this world till, amid the sombre shadows of autumn, in the year 1321, he lay down in a patron's chamber at Ravenna to die. *Guido Novello da Polenta* was the patron who had sufficient magnanimity of spirit to recognise the greatness and the worthiness of his guest, and tried to soothe the wounded disappointed heart of his colossal countryman by the warmest hospitalities of his nature. Dante had been on an embassy to Venice in behalf of his friend; but, like his former embassy to the Pontifical potentate, he was unsuccessful, and returned broken-hearted to Ravenna, threw himself on a bed of sickness, and with a last sigh for the ingratitude of his countrymen, but cheered probably by a significant impression of the value of the treasure which he was about to bequeath to posterity, and with a last prayer for the Divine protection of his deserted family—he was withdrawn from the troubles and conflicts of life, and transferred to the boundless mysteries of another world.

With respect to the influence of his genius on his own and subsequent generations, we can now only say this—that his genius has given inspiration, and sublimity, and strength, to all the greatest intellectual achievements between that time and this. He, as it were, created the language in which his thoughts are clothed. He showed that it possessed a melody, a beauty, and a power, which express with elegance and energy all the thoughts and feelings of our nature. He showed that it was not merely capable of conveying with graceful sweetness and simplicity the tenderest breathings of affection, but capable also of describing with terrific sublimity the mysterious grandeur and secrets of the unseen world, and also of expressing with thrilling vigour and eloquence the wildest and most extravagant passions of the human heart. Some of the noblest and most startling achievements in poetry and in painting

have been derived from him. Michael Angelo owes the conception of his last Judgment to the genius of Dante—as well as a great deal more; and is said to have made a design for every page of the Divine Comedy. In the Master-piece of the English School, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, we are indebted to Dante's influence; and one of the greatest statesmen of modern times said that “next to Demosthenes, Dante is the writer who ought to be most attentively studied by every man who desires to attain oratorical eminence.” As a proof of the popularity of Dante's great work—the Divine Comedy—a few years after his death, we are told that commentators were appointed at the public expense by the principal universities of his country, and the eminent Boccaccio was engaged to deliver expository lectures on the difficulties and beauties of the great Poem in the Cathedral pulpit of Florence. The invention of printing brought on, after 1470, 20 editions in 30 years. During the festival in celebration of the sixth century of Dante, there was celebrated in the oldest palace in his native city, 204 editions of the Divine Comedy, 32 translations in various tongues and dialects, 12 separate commentaries, 28 editions of the minor works, 65 copies of different illustrations of the Life and Works of Dante, 48 MSS. of the Divine Comedy, belonging to the 14th and 15th centuries; 132 of the same epoch without date, and hundreds of manuscript commentaries and documents relating to Dante, to his age, or to eminent personages mentioned in the Poem.

The man upon whom so much labour has been bestowed, and so much erudition employed, and to whom so many thoughtful hours have been devoted, must have exerted an influence upon mankind of an indescribable character.

We are entirely prevented in this article from attempting an analysis of the Poem, or even hinting at the endless subtle beauties which are enshrined in it. *Non ragionam di lor, ma guarda e passa.* His own title of the Poem is, “Here begins the comedy of Dante Alighieri, a Florentine by birth, not in character;” and he explains the word Comedy as that which speaks in lowly style, beginning harshly, and ending prosperously. He describes in his Poem, in a style of graphic vigor and sublimity, which had never been equalled before, and has never been realised since, in any language, ancient or modern—his journey amid the overwhelming

torments of hell, through the milder atmosphere of Purgatory, up to the triumphant and transcendent joys of Heaven. Hell—Purgatory—Heaven—just as the unseen world was figured in the Christianity of the Middle Ages—just as it was figured in the boundless fancy, and existed in the indomitable faith of Dante. And there is such an overwhelming evidence of truthfulness in what he says, such an appearance of reality about his assertions, there is such an honesty in his narrative, such an air of common life in his descriptions, and such minute delineation and scrupulous fidelity to the most trifling circumstances, that you can scarcely escape the impression that it is all true. As he was passing along the streets one day a woman directed the attention of her companions to him, saying with a kind of suspicious awe—"There is the man who has been in hell." A similar feeling prompted the answer—"Of a truth thou must say true. Seest thou not how he has his beard shrivelled up, and his complexion brown through the heat and the smoke which are there below." In all his weary wanderings through the different circuits of the dolorous abyss, his graphic delineations inspire you with a feeling of inexpressible horror. The different groups stand out before you with an aspect of agonizing deformity, and you feel that you are contemplating more than a man in a book. You see him: you witness the writhings of his passion; your flesh creeps at the realisation of his woes. And as you are looking through the air *stained* with solid darkness, and as you are listening to hoarse moans of infinite woe, like a sparkling flash, the impenetrable gloom is brightened by a pleasant smile, introduced not for the purpose of transient embellishment, but for the purpose of contributing to the reality of the narrative—of rendering the painter's description more intelligible and graphic. In every part of the Poem similes of wonderful beauty and power are scattered, usually never more than two or three lines, which awaken pleasing sensations, and help to convey to you not merely the Poet's meaning more intelligibly, but help often to explain considerably the feelings with which they were contemplated by the Poet. And those similes are of the most bewitching variety, of the homeliest character as well as of the sweetest and most sublime: and they show that Dante was wont to regard with scrupulous attention and care, the most insignificant operations and

movements of the natural and physical world, as well as the most awe-inspiring movements of nature. He does not brood over a story with any lengthened delineation—often a line or two, intensely vivid, vigorous, and comprehensive; and the characters whom he introduces are generally men who but a very short time before, were taking an active part in the social, political, and religious movements round about them. There are two celebrated well-known pieces in the Poem—the most elaborately finished stories in the entire work—that of Francesca in the Fifth Canto of the Inferno, and that of Count Ugolino, who was locked up in a tower of Pisa, with his two sons and two grandchildren, and allowed to perish with hunger. Leigh Hunt says that the episode of Francesca is unquestionably one of the most beautiful pieces of writing in the world. Both of those Tragedies happened in the same year, when Dante was little more than twenty years old. The episode of Francesca was written in the very house in which she was born, in which her father lived, and where during the last years of his exile he was entertained with magnanimous cordiality. Carlyle says—

“Dante’s painting is not graphic only; taken on the wider scale, it is everywhere noble, and the outcome of a great soul. Francesca and her lover, what qualities in that! A thing woven as out of rainbows on a ground of eternal black. A small flute voice of infinite wail speaks there into our very heart of hearts. A touch of woman in it, too; *della bella persona che mi fu tolta*, and how, even in the pit of woe, it is a solace that *he* will never part from her! Saddest tragedy in these *alti guai*. And the racking winds, in that *aer bruno*, whirl them away again, to wail for ever.—Strange to think, Dante was the friend of this poor Francesca’s father; Francesca herself may have sat upon the poet’s knee, as a bright innocent little child. Infinite pity, yet also infinite rigour of law: it is so Nature is made; it is so Dante discerned that she was made. What a paltry notion is that of his *Divine Comedy’s* being a poor splenetic impotent terrestrial libel; putting those into hell whom he could not be avenged upon on earth! I suppose if ever pity, tender as a mother’s, was in the heart of any man, it was in Dante’s. But a man who does not know rigour cannot pity either. His very pity will be cowardly, egoistic,—sentimentality, or little better. I know

not in the world an affection equal to that of Dante. It is a tenderness, a trembling, longing, pitying love: like the wail of Aælian harps, soft, soft; like a child's young heart;—and then that stern, sore-saddened heart! Those longings of his towards his Beatrice, their meeting together in the *Paradiso*; his gazing in her pure transfigured eyes, she that had been purified by death so long, separated from him so far;—one likens it to the song of angels; it is among the purest utterances of affection, perhaps the very purest, that ever came out of a human soul."

It is to be hoped that this imperfect sketch of the illustrious Florentine may prompt others to examine with industry and affection the great work which he has bequeathed to his fellow men. They will find that he had a genuine and manly heart, an inexorable detestation of injustice and wrong, an imagination of marvellous vivacity and vigour, a genius of transcendent power and depth, an ardent appreciation of wisdom, and righteousness, and truth; and that with all the warmest energies of his dignified patriotic spirit, he loved his brethren, he loved his country, he loved religion, he loved God.

REV. WILLIAM HOLMES.

STREWN ASHES.

BY ALFRED HARBLOM.

[*Continued.*]

HEUSE.

Out yonder, where within the western breeze
 The elms bow softly over many shades,
 Cast down upon the rising of the glades,
 That sink toward the silent waveless seas.
 There is a higher mound upon the moss
 That overgrows the ground: a single stone,
 Above whose signal, weary and alone,
 Wheels and re-wheels a storm-bound albatross.
 Heuse lies beneath the hillock on the hill,
 Within the sound of seas that never wake,
 The billows now for him will never break,
 The tempest now to him is hushed and still.

It were but mockery of him to say :

“His soul is havened in the highest heaven :”

Unto a soul, as his, it was but given
To see and entertain the present day.

For I was with him when he died : he said,

“For evermore—farewell ! We know no light
That glistens through the glamour of the night,
Which shrouds the soul of the departed dead :

“It is a foul and most tyrannic fear

That causes man to grasp a hand in death,
And satisfy himself, that fading breath
Brings all the joy of life more subtly near.”

He lived in such an wise, and only knew

As law, whatever marked the right from wrong,
And, if he loved, and wearied of the song,
He turned where e'er a sweeter music flew.

Is it no lie that binds the spirit down

To living in a never lingering love ?

The bee that drains a flower and does not rove
Will perish ere the autumn leaves are brown.

For in a time we sicken and we cloy

Of dwelling in a samely perfumed air ;
Love fades and falters, and the heart is bare
To seek and find a warmer wealth of joy.

The fever, which of old was fiercely shed

Through all the blood that battles from the heart,
Grows cold and pulseless, as the chilling smart
On one who bows to touch the sleeping dead.

Erewhile he loved Clæthora : she was fed

With all the warmth of eastern motherhood,
That burned within the pulses of her blood,
Deepening the tawny gold around her head.

She was low-built in stature, yet so fair

That men found space not for her joyous face,
And sleek and languid limbs, whose subtle grace
Was couched as though for springing from a snare.

There was a lingering love within her eyes,
That fed all other love : and all aflame
Her red lips were : and cowardly and lame,
Men bowed beneath her soft and pensive sighs.
Out of the flower of her throat, there sprung
A little well of water, subtly sweet,
Where within all the fair and bitter meet,
Where—from the joyance of her life was wrung.
And in the cream-like contour of her face
The colour came and cleared in shifting mood,
Now tinged and pink with pulse of purple blood,
Or pale and wan away from his embrace.
No man could ever look, and laugh, and say—
“I tire of love :” for as some silken snake
Doth fasten on the throat and drink and slake,
So she did drink of love, allwhere, alway.
She would lean over Heuse : her head lain low
To snatch the sweeter sobbing of his breath,
And he, for passions sake as still as death,
Would close his eyes and clasp and keep her so.
Or he would spring, and fasten on her lips,
And backward bear her head, as one who drinks,
And draws the urn towards his lips, and thinks
To quench the wine that falls in dying drips.
The hyacinthine perfume of her hair
Blinded his senses, so I wot that he
Lay, as one swimming in a sulphurous sea,
Who drowns and dies for lack of purer air.
Then with the soft-sung straining of a song,
Or some sweet chord that scarcely moved a sound,
Or some light movement on the wroughten ground,
She broke upon his dreamy shadow throng.
Raising within the clear and sheeny gauze,
That bound her round, some little light of air,
Veiling a line to leave another bare,
Or falling at his feet upon a pause.

Or marking all the music with her feet,
Where little snake-like veins arose, and fled
Toward the sweet wan whiteness of her head,
To make more pure the exceeding film of it.
And anon brushing from her high sweet brow
The gold that fell in copious clusterets,
As some sun-fondled fount, that casts its jets
Toward the banks whereon the breezes blow.
I ween few men could love a woman thus
As he did love Clæthora : he did say—
“We never knew the night-tide or the day,
For love was day and night and light with us.”
Yet she grew weary, and another spoke,
Whose lips seemed fashioned with a fairer kiss,
And she, who fed upon such fruit as this,
Forgot, remembered, then flung off the yoke.
I saw him then : “She has done well,” said he,
“I should have tired perchance and wearied, then
The old-time’s love had wandered in my ken
And haunted me—now this can never be :”
“She has fled from me.” Then he never spoke
Again of her, nor ever loved again,
Nor do I think the severed love did wane
The ashes smouldered till the flames awoke.
A pestilence rode downward through the land,
And death reaped freely of the ripened sheaves,
And growing corn, and there were few reprieves
To many losses suffered at his hand.
Men wandered wearily within the night,
Fearing to fathom death, wherein their creed
Had hope to help them in their highest need,
And bade the shadows shelter them from sight.
Upon an evening when the stricken town
Was silent, save for all the sounds of death,
The sobs, the prayers, the echoes of a breath,
Ere in his grasp death seizes on his own,

Heuse passed a lonely house beside the sea,
Wherefrom a light fell faintly, as a life
That sinks and sobs within the changing strife
Wherein death struggles for the mastery.

He passed the outer gate: no bolt, or bar
Delayed his entrance, and the house was—bare?
Deserted? No, upon the midnight air
A wailing seemed to waken from afar.

In a lone room his enemy was lain
Dead: there he found Clæthora, and anew
The old love flamed and yet more fiercely grew,
And so he raised and bare her home again.

And then he nursed her, lingering by her side,
And all the old affection woke in her,
Yet she was loth to shew it: shame did stir,
And thus she often prayed him mock and chide.

The old fond fashion of her love returned,
Her fair faint loveliness re-lived again,
And, in the extreme passion of her pain,
The extreme passion of her being burned.

The love, and life, and shame could not abide,
And shame slew life, and shame but died with love,
Love lingered with her life, and as a dove
Wing-worn and wounded, so with shame she died.

She was Clæthora yet: and so it came
She died within his arms, one hand in his,
Her last breath spent upon a single kiss,
Wherein love lost a life and death slew shame.

Then he arose all old and grey, and thence
He wandered down to yonder grove of trees,
And lay within the sougning of the seas,
To die of weariness and pestilence.

We found him there, and there he wished to die,
So lingered for some hours, nor spoke again,
But slowly sank, nor seemed to suffer pain,
And sighed "Clæthora" in his utmost sigh.

And there we buried him : he bade it so :
 In life deserted, in death desolate,
 He lies where nature is his sole estate,
 Within the echo of the ocean's flow.

Good sooth, there is no power in me to speak
 All I would say of him, the loss is yet
 The doom of yesterday, and the regret
 Too powerful to find the words I seek.

So now : his God was nature, and the end
 Of love was death : and "Heuse" upon a stone
 Marks where he lies, all silent and alone,
 Beside the sands where earth and ocean blend.

TO A LADY.

GENTLE lady ! pure and sweet,
 Wonderfully sweet and fair,
 Soft white hands, and tiny feet,
 And a wealth of auburn hair—
 I can feel this poor heart beat
 With a wild and deep despair,
 Knowing thee so far above
 Any service I can pay,
 Any burning words of love
 That I dare not hope to say.
 Look upon me ! smile again !
 It is hard to see thee so ;
 But I must endure my pain,
 Pain that thou canst never know.

WALTER HOWARD.

A SOLDIER'S DEATH.

BRAVELY he fought and would not yield,
 Till wounded sore at last,
 He lies upon the battle-field,
 His life blood ebbing fast.

Dim are his eyes, and cold the brow,
By clustering curls o'er hung,
That used to be all gold, but now
Have crimson stains among.

One hand lies useless by his side,
The other closely clasps
A portrait of his promised bride,
Whose name he faintly gasps.

And he can hear the victors cheer
And vanquished comrades fly,
But though he feels that death is near
He does not fear to die.

The sun hath hid his face awhile
From where the hero lies,
The moon looks down with queenly smile,
And stars with wondering eyes ;

While with a slow and noiseless tread,
In pity for his fate,
Night curtains round the lonely bed
Softly compassionate.

But hush ! he speaks ! it is a prayer,
Swift angels waft on high ;
" Oh God ! this pain is hard to bear,
Wilt thou not let me die ?

And comfort her when I am far
Above this vale of tears,
And let us meet where nought can mar
The bliss of endless years ? "

The moon hath waned, the stars have fled,
The east is streaked with light,
The sun hath risen from his bed
And vanquished frowning night,
And dew is falling thick and fast
Upon the pale, cold brow—
It matters not, his pain is passed,
And naught can harm him now.

HARRY DALE.

ON THE POETIC ELEMENT AND ITS NATIONAL EXPRESSION IN ART.

PART II.

It has been well said, that when Poetry languishes High Art dies. This induces the question as to the causes which depress or foster Poetry.

And the law may almost be considered universal, that violent commotions, wars, struggles for liberty, and religious convulsions, are the immediate incentives to poetical inspiration. The Trojan war invoked a Homer. The sweet Psalmist of Israel tuned his harp amid revolution, anarchy, and national enterprise. Thermopylæ and Salamis, the memories of national prowess, kindled into song the Grecian Muse. The conquests of Cæsar were antecedent to Virgil. The era of Dante and Petrarch, Chaucer and Gower, succeeded that of the Crusades. What shall be said to the affluence of poetical inspiration which marked the Elizabethan period—when the spirit of chivalry was immortalised in the “Fairie Queene,” and Shakespeare wrote for all nations and for all time? Byron and Scott, Wordsworth and Shelley were born at a period of great political excitement, and their youth was passed amid scenes of anarchy and bloodshed. Thus as war inspired the Muse, and as the Muse inspired Art, the epochs enumerated were immediately followed by a revival of the Fine Arts.

But before glancing at the various ways in which the Poetical Element has influenced modern times, it may be well to consider for a moment the position Art held when Paganism was being supplanted by Christianity.

Up to this period Art had been the one purifying influence amid the debasing corruptions of heathen life or barbaric luxury. But when the light of Christianity burst upon the world and exposed the lie of Paganism, Art, associated as it had been, with all that the converts to the new faith abhorred, became an object of aversion. Many centuries elapsed before the natural instincts of human nature, which in proportion to their culture demand an expression, asserted their prerogative and restored the Fine Arts to their true position, to be the exponents of all that was

pure, and noble, and holy, in revealed religion, as before they had been the ministers to a lesser and inferior revolution.

The symbols of the heathen gods were supplanted by types and allegories taken from the Bible, which in its Oriental method of teaching by parables supplied an abundance of subjects, and even many allusions to the old mythology admitted of transposition, and retaining their antique forms survived under the new designations. Till the reign of Constantine all expression of Christian art was confined to the catacombs and similar hiding places of the early converts; but when Christianity became the recognised religion of the State, the Fine Arts were again consecrated to religion, and were employed to beautify and adorn the temples erected in her honour. And thus ancient art adapted itself to the forms of Christianity. Even in its first crude efforts (such as the paintings and sculptures in the catacombs) the higher influence of inspired truth opposed to the legends of Paganism, is shown in the peaceful earnestness of the subjects, and in the simple expression of spiritual meaning; in fact, the early utterances of that poetry of religious art, which in after ages found their fullest expression in Giotto, Fra Angelico, and Perujino.

But to give an example of how Pagan art was grafted into the Christian, and influenced it; St. Mark's at Venice may be cited as the most perfect specimen in this respect of harmonious incongruity.

Founded in the 9th century for the express purpose of receiving the relics of St. Mark, abstracted, rather than translated from Alexandria, it has been the constant pride of the Venetian Republic to add to its embellishment. The influence of Greek art is apparent in its construction, and the architects who designed the building are believed to have studied at Constantinople—hence the rise of the Byzantine school. Like Santa Sophia, the plan is that of a Greek cross, covered by five cupolas, to represent the five sacred wounds, the centre dome being of superior size to the others. Heathen and Christian art here strangely intermingled. The four bronze horses (believed to have been cast in the reign of Nero for the triumphal arch erected in his honour, and subsequently removed to Alexandria by Constantine,) are placed on the central

portal of the vestibule, which is enriched by Byzantine work, representing Prophets and Evangelists, trades and occupations, mystical figures, and fabulous monsters. And again within this, strange collection of carved imagery, and framed as it were by it is the more modern mosaic of the Last Judgment, executed in 1650. Inserted in the outer walls are curious tablets, the spoils of heathen temples, representing scenes from the Mythology; while five hundred pillars of precious marbles, of which many of the capitals are exquisitely carved with natural foliage, attest at once the lavish use of costly material and the poetic skill of the artist. Within, the building is the same mixture of barbaric wealth, refined taste and religious feeling. Allusion must also be made to the mosaics which enrich every available space, and are admirable examples of that art in every style of era and development, from the early Byzantine to the decline of the Renaissance.

During the first centuries when Christianity was thus struggling with the superstitions of Paganism, the fear of pollution and participation in unhallowed amusement made even the most innocent pleasures appear dangerous to those earnest souls who were striving to convert the world; so that a severe and monastic influence suppressed the natural emotions. Again, the state of ignorance that succeeded the fall of the Roman empire, prevented all intellectual intercourse, except among the learned few who cultivated the Latin tongue, while these confined their attention to dogmatic teachings and philosophic disputations. But gradually the natural propensities of human nature asserted themselves and required an outlet. In these modern times when the periodical literature of the day allows scope for both pen and pencil to give free expression of opinion and satirical comments upon men and manners, it is difficult to understand how, in the dark ages, these qualities were cribbed and suppressed. And to these causes may be ascribed the introduction of the grotesque and comic element into art. Prior to the Christian era every civilised nation had a literature and a drama, and the spirit of humour found its legitimate expression; but letters being chiefly confined to monastic institutions, the earliest examples of the grotesque with the Poet's element in art are to be found in those illuminated missals which are the glory of the past and the wonder of the present. Wit and humour, as well as reverence and

invention found an outlet here, and no cartoon from *Punch*, no sketch from *Figaro*, can convey a more satirical commentary upon contemporary manners and customs, than do these illustrations produced by nameless monks in obscure and silent cloisters. To these same causes may also be traced, as its extreme opposite, the ascetic character of early art. And be it remembered, these antagonistic qualities also influenced Sculpture in its combination with Architecture, while there is not a Gothic building yet standing which amid all its deep religious teachings, does not contain humorous allusions or witty sarcasm.

But while the grotesque was allowed, the wild loveliness of Gothic art was never forgotten. Emotional in its simplicity, the true spirit of the Christian religion hallowed natural forms to divine purposes. As under divine inspiration the Jewish Temple was embellished with "palm trees and open flowers" and "wreaths of pomegranates," so in nature, amid all her gentle and manifold creations, the Christian artist sought his subjects. Indeed it is believed that to the interlacing of the branches in an avenue of trees the pointed Gothic owes its origin; and legend still points to a grove near Fountains Abbey, which is believed to have alike served the builders for a model and a shelter during the course of erection.

How exquisite is Gothic tracery! how simple yet complete the carved imagery of capital, corbel, and architrave—in all this luxuriousness of detail—the leaf or flower, now curled in quaint and varied device, now blown gently aside to admit the insect to hover on a feathery spray, or bird to peck at the ripe bunches of fruit, or squirrel to crack the nuts which hang down in clusters from the branches.

Thus, throughout, the emotional character of Art, under the inspiration of Christianity, contrasts with the severe and classic forms of belief of the old world. As prejudice against the Fine Arts subsided, they again became the consecrated handmaids to religion. And thus the emotional character of Christianity produced the best original school, which in architecture is termed the Gothic, and which in painting gave to the South the art of fresco, and to the North that of illumination; influenced for many centuries by the traditions of the Greek School. Byzantine was the

earliest outcome in the East of this modern School, while the northern nations instituted the Norman; these two styles met in central Europe, and produced the Lombardic Gothic; which again, under various modifications passed to the North and expanded into Early English, at the same time that in the sunny South it culminated in the Tower of Giotto, at Florence, and inspired the painter to add colour to the noble caskets which were destined to enshrine his more perishable productions.

When allusion is made to painting, so vast a field is spread before the imagination, that any attempt to consider the subject in detail would far exceed the limits of this little sketch; but some reference may be made to three great masters, not only because they exercised unlimited power in their department of art, but also because the works of all three may be studied under the same roof—that of the Sistine Chapel at Rome. To Michael Angelo belongs power, to Raphael fame, to Fra Angelico the religious ideal. In the first nature is violently forced for the creation of a mighty representation; in the second, the perfection of drawing, of colour, and the mechanism of art is everywhere apparent; while in the third, soul speaks to soul, and his tender, holy pencil refines, satisfies and exalts.

The last named comes first in chronological order. Born in 1387, Fra Angelico became at an early age a Dominican monk in St. Mark's, at Florence, which he enriched with many of his noblest efforts. From the beginning to the end of his career, one unvarying principle actuated him; and of all painters, before or since, he is the exponent of the sublimest ideas and gentlest forms that religious art has inspired. He lived in an atmosphere of holiness. Vesari relates that he was wont to say "that the practice of art required repose and holy thoughts, and that he who would depict the acts of Christ, must learn to live with Christ." And his biographer adds, "Some go so far as to say that he never took up his brush without first humbling himself in prayer." As his art was inborn and inspired, so Fra Angelico adapted to his religious feelings the means best suited to their expression. Full of the gentlest emotions, combined with implicit faith, every subject that emanated from his pencil was complete in tenderness, purity, and holy fervour; while his latest productions are as full of vivacity

happiness, and imagination as those painted in middle life, when his powers were at maturity.

Michael Angelo stands forth in direct opposition to every characteristic of Fra Angelico, the religious element alone excepted. He lived in stirring times, when liberty of thought and action was struggling with superstition and tyrannical power, and in him is embodied the very Prometheus of the Christian era. With him, it is the fierce struggle of the mortal after immortality, striving to snatch from Heaven the vivifying flame for no selfish aim, no ignoble purpose, and though frustrated and baffled, and beaten back, still unfaltering in his faith in ultimate good, unswerving in the rectitude of his purpose, content to suffer and to endure, yet conscious of a divine power superior to the fate that enthralled him, and in patient trust looking onward to the consummation of his aspirations. In this marvellous Titan the creative element was so strong that every material seemed too weak and puny for his vast conceptions. No plan was large enough for his architectural design,—no wall-space sufficient for the exercise of his brush,—and it is said that he was wont to chisel the marble with such force, that masses were struck off in so reckless a manner, that it appeared incredible that the blow should answer the sculptor's intentions.

To see the full development of his genius in this latter branch of art, Sculpture, reference need only be made to his monuments to the Medicis at Florence. In the statue of Lorenzo it has been observed, that though it bears resemblance to the antique, it rivals those excellencies in which the ancients most excelled—repose and dignity. While the very spirit of Prometheus seems enshrined in those mysterious forms which rest upon the cenotaphs beneath. There, in those four creations—*Twilight*, *Night*, *Dawn*, and *Day*, appear embodied all thought, all identity; gathering into one complexity the doubts and aspirations of the period in which Michael Angelo lived.

Twilight is represented as calm and unemotional, content to rest upon the traditions of the past, with no aspirations for the future. To this succeeds *Sleep*, but it is a troubled slumber, the unquiet rest which needs awakening. The tragic mask has fallen from her nerveless grasp, the benumbing poppy entwines her brow, a tor-

toise lies at her feet,—but *Dawn* is near—calm in the witness of the mysterious future that gleams dimly through the mists of ignorance, superstition, and tyranny—for have not the purple mountain tops flashed back the rays of the rising sun, and *Day* appears?—clothed in giant form, basking in inherent light. But here the sculptor feels the impotency of his art, and as his eye cannot meet the sun in his strength, so his daring hand may not give features to the impersonation of Light, and while the limbs are finished with consummate skill, the features are merely indicated—left vague and indistinct, yet sublime in intention and grand in their incompleteness.

The same qualities which distinguish Michael Angelo as a sculptor are observable in him as a painter; witness his frescoes in the Sistine Chapel: and as an architect, it need hardly be added that he designed St. Peter's at Rome. The fragments of verse left by him explain the intensely poetical and imaginative character of all his artistic productions.

Raphael is so familiarized to all by cartoons and engravings that any reference to his style is superfluous, except to remark, that if the greatest, he was yet the last original painter of religious subjects. It must ever be borne in mind, in considering the subject, the Poetical element in art, that the distinction between the *poetical* and the *prosaic* does not consist in technical execution, or in the subject selected, or in the vehicle employed; but in the sentiment which inspires it. Domenichino can translate a scene from Ovid into literal prose, while Rembrandt may elevate the commonest object into ideal beauty. The homely Dutch housewife with her fair stolid countenance, surrounded by cabbages and onions, burnishing up her pots and pans to the perfection of polish, may be as poetical a production as far as the motive goes as any painting by an Italian master—the handling of the subject lifts it out of common place—the chiaroscuro, the unity of design the harmony of detail, and the exquisite finish combine to satisfy the mind as well as the eye, and it is pronounced a master-piece of art. Thus, while so much is said about specific styles in art, they will be found to arise from these causes—some element of beauty or sentiment is made the means of conveying mental pleasure or moral interest. And in considering the special form of any one of

the Fine Arts as distinguished from the rest, the perfection of each will be found, not to depend upon qualities which it has in common with its rival, but from qualities peculiar to itself. All outside influences, such as the character of a nation, school, or individual, the circumstances of climate and of locality, combine to modify style, while it leaves the poetic element unchanged. And the power of manual expression is only limited by the brain-power which directs it. Our modern Flaxman, in his illustrations to Homer and Dante, has displayed as great imaginative power as that which inspired their muse. In the hands of a Foley or a Woolner the modern frock coat may be made to convey sentiments more elevated and poetical than the Roman toga, or the classic drapery of the so-called Idealistic School.

Thus, when free intercourse was established throughout the world, the distinctions between nations became less apparent, and the Fine Arts were more universal in their character. The result is shown in modern times by the many-sidedness of art. The Renaissance was the last grand effort to revive the classic and to found a new school, which was split up into fragments, each fragment forming a nucleus, which again became a centre throwing out smaller oftshoots. Hence the degradation and decline of the Fine Arts during what is termed the modern Augustine age; when in our own country Whitmarsh reigned supreme—and Vanbrugh designed buildings after the most approved Grecian models, and West filled his acres of canvas with religious subjects, and sculptors turned every soldier into a Mars or sailor into a Neptune, and clothed or unclothed their sitters with reckless impartiality, provided it was after the antique, or in Græco-Roman disguise.

Were the question asked, what is the prevailing style of poetry in the present day? the reply would be multifarious—but of all, the *subjective* or *reflective* element is most cultivated. And so with art. Architecture, sculpture, and painting, partake of the revival of all schools, ancient and modern, modified by this peculiar leaning to the *metaphysical* and the *naturalistic*, shown in extreme development, by the Pre-raphaelite School on the one hand, and the Sensational School on the other.

But on the whole, the tone in Art in this country is sounder and more healthy than it has ever been. As Mr. Ruskin truly says,

"There is but one way for a nation to obtain good art—to enjoy it." And never were there so many facilities offered for acquiring at once a taste for the Fine Arts, or of indulging that taste when once acquired. The schools opened throughout the kingdom are educating the public to appreciate Art, and museums and galleries are ever open for the public gratification. Painting has attained an excellence never dreamed of before—yet it may be alleged that genius is diffused through too many channels to be singly or originally great. Be it so. The many, not the few, are enlightened therewith. Poetry is a golden thread running through the web of human life, and Art in all her endless variety, is the tangible and material expression of that yearning after the Beautiful, which is but another name for Perfection. And as this can only find its completion in Him who is the source and centre of all perfection—so the cultivation of the Fine Arts must purify and elevate the heart, and exercise a beneficent influence upon society in general.

A. E. G.

JOAN OF ARC.*

THIS is a poem, as the author tells us, already stamped with the brand of failure by the critics of Trinity College, Dublin; but from their decision the poet boldly turns to the public, and asks their judgment on his work.

Of the critics he says, "These gentlemen have either considered my poem good, but not equal to those which have been successful, or they have deemed it below their standard. In the former case I have not a word to say, except that I rejoice greatly that Ireland has produced two poets better than myself, and that I anxiously await the opportunity of reading their compositions." We trust the opportunity will be given, and that we, too, may have the pleasure of reading those successful poems, which, judging from the one before us, must possess a high degree of excellence. At the same time we cannot refrain from congratulating the Dublin University on the poetical talents of its students.

* A Poem not awarded the Vice-Chancellor's Prize. London. Kerby and Endean.

From the preface we gather that "Joan of Arc" is published without revision, exactly in the state in which it competed for the prize, and we cannot help regretting that the author did not carry out his original intention, and bestow more time and labour on his work. For although he has given us a poem full of promise, and containing some beautiful passages, it is not a perfected work; and here and there the effect is greatly marred by evident traces of hurry and carelessness. As an example, we may take the commencement of Joan's speech immediately after the coronation of Charles, which is one of the gems of the poem;—

"The pictured scene of this thrice glorious day,
Has ever been companion of my way.
All, all has come to pass, and now I seem
As one who wakes from some strange troubled dream.
The life of war, in which my lot was cast,
Sweeps torrent-like between me and the past;
And, clearly heard, through all its rush and roar,
Voices are calling from the distant shore.
Dear sounds of peace, dear vales of green Lorraine
Like jealous playmates bid me back again."

So far this speech is very beautiful, and highly poetical. The position of the heroine is clearly conceived—looking back in the triumphant hour of achieved success to her quiet youth; between which and the moment of her triumph sweeps, torrent-like, a life of war; while across that torrent, out of the past, voices are heard calling upon her to return. Two lines, however, are added which blur the picture,

"And warnings too, of some dread felt to be,
If I neglect their call are borne to me."

What voices are these? Where do they come from?

Then the end of the first part beginning,

"'Twere long to hear, and long to tell,"

is an evident hurrying carelessly over distasteful ground; and other careless lines might be quoted. But on the other hand we have the speech of Joan in the first part:—

"I still recall that day,
How through the fields I took my pensive way,
My soul filled with strange thoughts; how by a stream,

Which wandered nigh, I sat me down to dream ;
 And how the evening bells that called to prayer,
 Flowed solemn out upon the perfumed air,
 And sudden in their peal I heard a tone
 Which said that France might rise by me alone.
 Oh ! then, like waves, o'er my enraptured soul
 Dim shades of my great destiny did roll,
 And by that stream I knelt, and weeping prayed
 To God's blessed mother for support and aid.
 And from that day those visions often came,
 Voices like distant bells, and forms of flame,
 That bade me bide my time, for that this hand
 Should crown my King, and save my native land !"

In this speech there is an appreciating realization of the state of mind of the youthful enthusiast ; and in the lines :—

"Oft with Pierre the groves she wanders through,
 And loves to fancy they are wide Chenu.
 Ah ! Joan, drink the pleasure of the hour,
 The wonder of each budding leaf and flower,
 And all the season's joyous mystery ;
 For spring shall never rise again for thee."

the effect of the sudden breaking away from a quiet description of the spring time, into an address to Joan full of irrepressible feeling, is very forcible.

The coronation of Charles is also extremely good, but we have not space to notice further either the beauties or the imperfections of the poem. The author has not come to his full powers, but in his work there is great promise, and he has succeeded admirably in awakening and maintaining an interest in his heroine, albeit the story of Joan of Arc is familiar to us all. Yet, undoubtedly, many a fair spring promise has ended in a poor fruition. Earnestly we hope it may not be so in the case of the young author before us ; for him there must be no resting, but a constant reaching after perfection. He has our best wishes in his efforts to attain an honored place among our poets.

A HIGHLAND HOME.

I.

High on the road to heaven, enshrined 'mid the sacred hills,
 Stands a cottage clothed with flowers, fed by the fostering rills,
 'Tis where my mother kissed me and taught my lips to pray,
 And where my father blessed me when I went far away.
 But where'er my footsteps wander, no matter where I roam,
 My heart still closely clings to thee, my happy Highland home.

II.

God guard the loved ones living there, whose locks are silver white,
 And send the silent angels there, in raiment like the light,
 Let sunbeams steal within the room and play upon the floor,
 And sweetly-laden breezes come within the lowly door.
 I may not gaze on thee again, but still where'er I roam,
 My heart will closely cling to thee, my happy Highland home.

J. O.

"VILLAGE VERSES."*

POETRY to please us must make its way into our hearts and touch the tenderest strings. The thoughts must thrill and throb through us like fresh life, causing our eyes to glisten and our tongues to long to tell them out in the ears of the weary world.

The soul that loves not poetry is surely of the smallest sort, and savours more of the things beneath than of those which gladden the ears and hearts of the heavenly hosts. God always speaks poetry. His words are life, and flow sweetly into the sighing spirit of man. Much, too much, of this day's singing is of the earth earthy, full of the things seen and temporal, with but little of the deep unseen spiritual element which is found in the field of inspiration. Genuine genius flows like the sea, beautiful on the surface, but with depths of unseen sublime life. The old Prophet's songs are woven with glowing golden threads which sparkle like the sunny sea, but beneath are wells of living water, which have refreshed millions of mankind in their march to the grave. The poet sees with the eyes of his soul that is why true poetry, which

* By Guy Roslyn. Moxon.

is closely akin to the celestial, sings not of the sensual even in nature, but sitting at her flowery feet he hears her many melodies in sky and storm, wind and water, fruit and flower, and writes her music in living lines. Sometimes he peers into the far past as the mighty Milton, or into the dim future like the daring Dante, whose minds seem too large to linger amid terrestrial scenes. The streams that gush from such sources must flow through the ages so long as man retains any image of his Maker.

We have now the pleasure of presenting to our readers draughts from a rill which rings with some of the music of nature. We like best the tones which trill from pure love's lips, and advise all who wish to hear the soothing songs which awaken the echoes in our charming rural retreats to drink deeper from this fresh though small fountain:—

EXTRACT FROM AN APRIL DAISY.

“Gold-crested herald of the spring,
You tell of blackbirds that shall sing
In secret plots of growing green,
Of walks in evening shades between
The sinking sun and rising moon,
When trees are full of leaves in June.”

FROM OLD BELLS.

‘Day is dying, the lake has lost the light of afternoon,
Stars shine, and waters shimmer round the shadow of the moon,
Ring on old bells! and let me dream of a morning in the spring,
When I went out with my young love to hear the glad birds sing;
The sky was blue, the grass was green, the gorse had spread its
gold,
And little gusts of scented wind came laughing o’er the wold,
Ring on old bells! sing on sweet bells! ring on! for now I hear
The echo of lost melodies, and distant days seem near.’

BETROTHAL.

I cannot tell you of my joy that morn,
When we together walked between the corn,
And sunniest beams
Were chasing with soft silver-sandalled feet,
The gliding shadows on the golden wheat;
Fair day of dreams!
Pure dreams prophetic, that all came true,
And gave me love in life and life in you.

THE JUNGFRAU.

MIGHTY mountain clouds are clinging
 Closely round your hoary head,
 And fair flowers and verdure springing
 At your base where lies the bed
 Of torrents falling, soft spray flinging,
 By your snows for ever fed.
 Have you stood the same for ages,
 Long before the hand of man
 Blotted nature's fairest pages,
 Formed you part of God's great plan
 When the world was first created,
 Launched by him in space, and fated
 Fair field of man's mad history
 And Christ's redeeming mystery?

C. OFFORD.

 MEROË.*

MEROË is a blank verse poem of considerable length, the scene of which is laid in Egypt, in the sixth century before Christ. As Mr. Clowes tells us in the preface, the object of his work is to prove that the more educated of the ancient Greeks and Egyptians were not satisfied with the cut-and-dried religion of their priests; and that the sentiment which may be called "intellectual love," as distinct from simple passion, was not unknown at the time of which he writes. These theories are advocated in an epic which, with considerable regard for historical truth, describes the invasion of Egypt by Cambyses, King of Persia. As is well-known, Phanes, commander of the Egyptian guard and a Greek mercenary, deserted his post under great provocation just before the commencement of hostilities, and joined the enemy. Such is the authentic peg upon which the author hangs his poetic romance.

Phanes is a widower with two young children and an adopted son of Greek birth named Cleon, who is in love with a Memphian maiden named Meroë. After Phanes has been insulted by his master, King Amasis, he decides to join the Persians, and gives Cleon an opportunity of accompanying him. The latter, after consulting with Meroë, thinks it his duty to go; and the two soldiers set out at night upon the Nile, and at last reach the Persian camp. The poem then relates how Arses, the commander of

* By W. Laird-Clowes. Daniell, Brompton Road, S.W.

Cambyzes' body-guard, is deposed by his King to make room for Phanes, and hints at the natural hatred for the Greeks that immediately takes possession of the injured officer. Meanwhile the Egyptians, enraged at Phanes' desertion of their cause, gain possession of his two children, and massacre them upon the walls of Pelusium before the eyes of their father, who, driven wild by his loss, gives the city over to his soldiers, and after an awful vengeance, goes mad, leaving the supreme command to devolve on Cleon. After a bold picture of the sack of the town, the onward march of the Persians, and their decisive victory near Memphis are described. Meröe having accompanied her father to the scene of conflict, tends the wounded (amongst whom is Arses, who has been stunned by a blow from Cleon, against whom he had mutinied,) and is ultimately taken prisoner by the savage Persian himself, who sends her to a deserted temple, where by his orders, she is to remain until he can visit her and force her to submit to his unworthy intentions. Cambyzes, whose dislike to the Egyptian religion is a matter of history, deposes Cleon to search all the temples in the vicinity of the battle-field and to drive away the priests, and in the execution of this duty the young Greek surprises Arses, who is on the point of insulting Meroë in her prison. Undoubtedly the situation of this, the last scene of the poem, is very dramatic, its main defect being, perhaps, its brevity. Arses of course is deservedly punished, and Cleon and Meroë once more united. Such is the bare outline of the story. A few short extracts must conclude our notice of the poem. On human littleness Cleon soliloquises thus:—

“Could I but see with one short moment's light
The things beyond this gaudy world and gaze
The depth of one sheer instant into space,
I should be happy. . . . Happy?—No, forsooth!
The longing, born and pampered, soon would grow,
And I should ask for more. No happiness
Is in excited thirst! No peacefulness
From one quick glance would ever come to me.
I would not sip by drops, but drain the bowl
And court intoxication as I drank
The draught of unexpected wonderment.
The little granted would be pledge for more,
And more, and more, until invaded sense
Fell backwards impotent, and died.”

Of Love, he says:—

“Reality of dreams and thoughts congealed
To action is the love of heart for heart.
The white-robed phantoms of a sleeper's brain,
That sing weird harmonies of better life;
The snowy forms of dreamy, floating things
That beckon onwards ever; the ideals
Of reverie,—are summoned into life
To people Love's bright kingdom.”

Of Creeds, he argues :—

“ A creed,—what is it? Some sole man’s idea
Of ostentatious goodness that has caught
And fettered careless ones,— a plan of life
Drawn on the easy slopes of pleasure’s hill,
Where men may see it, and admire its lines.
A little while it keeps its pristine shape,
And then comes one who dares to alter it,
To suit his own short sight ; and copiers
Of him come quickly,—some who cannot see
And some who will not,—till the ancient plan
Remains no longer.

With one more quotation, telling of Meroë’s capture, we must conclude :—

“ A blank,
When sense and feeling slumbered, came between
The vision and the waking ; and the voice
That told that Arses lived inquired the name
Of her who thus had tended him. But light
Refused to show her to him, and to stain
Her purity with his befouling glance,
Until the day was ageing ; and the train
Of captured ones, drawn up to hear their lot,
Was jewelled to his eyes by one fair thing
That he had seen in vision. There she stood,
Tall and magnificent in helplessness.
A queen among the conquered : with her eyes
Unquenched,—unquenchable :—her eyes that cried
“ Good bye dear life, dear love ! I once have hoped
But now I cannot : I can only stand
And beg with folded hands for sudden death.”

CORRESPONDENCE.

F. B.—We shall be happy to receive poems upon sacred subjects, but simple Sunday-school hymns are not suitable to the *Poets’ Magazine*.

T. WATKINS.—“ The Weary Pilgrim ” has come to an untimely end as desired. “ The Song of the Sea ” we hope to insert in a future number. Thanks.

H. C.—Your poem displays poetical ideas mangled by weak expression. The latter fault will however mend with practice.

H. L. A.—See answer to F. B.

A. M.—Too juvenile.

E. A. H.—We cannot reply by letter unless a stamped envelope is enclosed. Good original sketches would certainly improve our Magazine, and you can if you choose forward some for approval.

H. F. S.—“After Meeting,” though not up to our standard, is a pretty little poem which seems to have flowed from the writer’s heart. We quote the concluding lines:—

“But what of clouds or noisy street?
For sunshine gay, for singing birds,
We had each other’s eyes and words;
And flower-like memories sprang around
Making the dull place fairy ground;
It was enough to meet.”

J. J.—The first rhymes in your hymn to “Night,” (vale and veil) are inadmissible. The poem has the appearance of a first attempt. Try again.

M. CLIFFORD.—Should you favour us with articles, we would make you an offer for them, if suitable.

A. FORREST.—Your poems are pretty, but not quite up to standard. We shall be glad to hear from you again.

WILTON.—The verses forwarded would be suitable to our Magazine, but, unfortunately, they have already appeared in a collection of the works of Mrs. Hemans. Editors are not so simple as you imagine.

ROBERT R.—Accepted with thanks.

L. H.—It is always unwise to invite comparison by choosing a subject used by a great genius. “To a Daisy” inevitably suggests Burn’s well-known poem. Your verses are pretty, but too ordinary for publication.

T. SMITH.—Clever, but not suitable.

RICHARD M.—Guiding stars in the shape of poets are, of course, of inestimable value, but there is no occasion to flatter yourself that *you* were born to attain to such sublime heights.

A. FENTON.—Your verses possess more than average descriptive power; but the subject is one of only local interest.

TO INTENDING CONTRIBUTORS.

Original contributions only are acceptable.

Each contribution must bear on the first page the sender’s name and address.

Rejected MSS. cannot be returned unless post paid. Authors should keep copies of short poems.

Should a reply by letter be required, a stamped addressed envelope must be enclosed.

WAITING.

125.

Words and Music by LANSDOWNE COTTELL, R.A.M.

VOICE.

Andantino.

PIANO.

p *fz* *dim.*

I'm

wait-ing for my own true love To banish an-xious fear, With

sun-shine ra-diant as be-fore, This beat-ing heart to cheer. Now

rall.

ev'-ry mo-ment seems so long, Dark clouds are round me thrown, But

WAITING.

joy will come once more to me, I feel my love is known. For my

cres.

The first system of the musical score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features a vocal melody and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5, then a half note D5. The piano accompaniment starts with a half note G3, followed by quarter notes A3, B3, and C4, then a half note D4. The system concludes with a triplet of eighth notes G4, A4, and B4.

love loves me; I will not grieve a - gain; Were

vigoroso.

The second system continues the melody in G major. The vocal line has a half note D5, followed by quarter notes E5, F#5, and G5, then a half note A5. The piano accompaniment features a triplet of eighth notes G4, A4, and B4, followed by a half note C5. The system ends with a half note D5.

I to show a doubting heart 'Twould give my own one pain. Were

fz fz fz

The third system continues the melody in G major. The vocal line has a half note E5, followed by quarter notes F#5, G5, and A5, then a half note B5. The piano accompaniment has a half note C5, followed by quarter notes D5, E5, and F#5, then a half note G5. The system ends with a half note A5.

I to show a doubting heart 'Twould give my own one

The fourth system continues the melody in G major. The vocal line has a half note B5, followed by quarter notes C6, D6, and E6, then a half note F#6. The piano accompaniment has a half note G5, followed by quarter notes A5, B5, and C6, then a half note D6. The system ends with a half note E6.

pain, 'Twould give my own one pain.

rall.

The fifth system concludes the piece in G major. The vocal line has a half note F#6, followed by quarter notes G6, A6, and B6, then a half note C7. The piano accompaniment has a half note D6, followed by quarter notes E6, F#6, and G6, then a half note A6. The system ends with a half note B6. The tempo marking 'rall.' is present above the vocal line and below the piano line.

I lis - ten to the

murm'ring wind, And whisper not a word: What sound is that ap -

- proach-ing me, A step I've of - ten heard. A voice I hear with

ec - sta-cy— No long - er I'm a - lone, One moment more my

love is here, A hand is in my own. For my love loves me:
vigoroso.